

Remarks

Claims 1-4 and 9-14 are currently pending. Examination and consideration are respectfully requested.

Telephone Discussion

Applicant thanks the Examiner for discussing the current Office action during our January 14, 2004, telephone conference. In summary, we discussed amending the cross reference section in the specification and the § 112 issues.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

Claims 1, 9-13 are rejected under 35 USC § 112 as allegedly being indefinite for failing to state a class of alkali oxides. Applicant traverses this rejection. The term "alkali oxides" is referenced in the specification, e.g., at page 8, ll. 2-8, in a manner such that those of ordinary skill in the art know that it means "alkali metal oxides." This is especially true in light of the fact that those of ordinary skill in the art know that a reference to alkali oxides must mean alkali metal oxides. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 9 and 13 are rejected under 35 USC § 112 as allegedly being indefinite in regard to the specified ranges set forth in the claims. The current amendment addresses this issue by explicitly stating in the claim what is stated in the specification in regard to the term at issue. That is, "barium oxide" is explicitly excluded from the alkaline earth oxide term. The amendment is thus not narrowing. Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Priority

Priority has been claimed in the present application to the parent application (Application Number 09/533,385 filed March 22, 2000) and to the provisional patent application (Application Number 60/125,796 filed March 23, 1999) as reflected on the PTO Filing Receipt and the Preliminary Amendment filed on December 5, 2001. The parent application (Application Number 09/533,385 filed March 22, 2000) included a claim of priority to the provisional grandparent application. Applicant thanks the Examiner for pointing out that the specification again needed amendment due to issuance of the parent application. By this Amendment, the

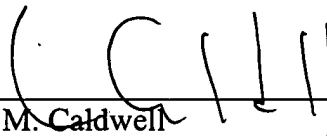
patent number of the parent application, which issued after the Preliminary Amendment was filed, is added to the first sentence of the specification.

Applicant believes the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request notification of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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